

FREE!



# SHOPPING FOR OUTFITTERS?

## THE BEYOND THE BASICS SHOPPING GUIDE FOR ADVENTURES!™

**F**inding the best river and adventure outfitter for you and your family means knowing the right questions to ask before you send in your deposit!



### QUESTIONS FOR FAMILY TRIPS...

#### THE BASICS:

- Can I bring my children on this trip?
- How old should they be?
- Do you have children sized equipment such as personal floatation devices (pfd's) or wetsuits?

#### BEYOND BASICS:

- Do you provide special discounts for children?
- We want to enjoy a family trip with our younger children as well as bring our older ones along, are there activity options for everyone?
- Do you provide anything special for children on your trips? (e.g., in camp games, special hikes?)
- Are there inflatable kayak options for older kids?
- Do you make it a priority to provide opportunities for parents and kids to work together as teams?
- Do you have food you know kids will like?

#### RED LIGHTS!

The enjoyment of sharing the wilderness with your children can be dampened with the energy of trying to make sure they are safe and entertained. Be sure the company has experience with children on trips so you get a real vacation too!

For more information on how to choose an outfitter call: 800-861-6553

[www.mtnriver.com](http://www.mtnriver.com)



“I want to have fun, feel challenged, or just relax, what trip do you recommend for what my priorities are?”



## QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TRIP...

### THE BASICS:

- I want to have fun, feel challenged, or just relax, what trip do you recommend for what my priorities are?
- How strenuous is the trip? What kind of health and fitness is necessary?
- Does the company offer free, secure parking for river trips?
- What kind of transportation is provided and what do I need to be prepared for?
- How many other participants are on the trip?
- What am I expected to do on this trip? Cook, clean-up, carry gear?
- What equipment am I responsible for? My own water bottle, sleeping and camp gear?
- What are your price ranges?
- Do you have special discounts?

### BEYOND BASICS:

- What other activities occur while on the trip? (Hiking, wildlife & bird watching walks, camp activities like volleyball and Frisbee, climbing wall, etc.)
- Do you bring different types of boats on the trip to try? (Oar rafts, paddle boats, inflatable kayaks, fishing only rafts?)
- What kind of food is served? Are the guests consulted in menu preparation? Is wine and beer served with dinner or do we bring our own?
- Do you offer discounted riverside camping?

### RED LIGHTS!

Companies with the lowest prices may have the oldest equipment and lower paid guides. All trips are not equal - shop for the best all around experience.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT GUIDES...

### THE BASICS:

- How long have your guides been with your company?
- How much experience do they have on the trips you run?
- Do your guides all have advanced first-aid and CPR certifications?
- Do you have both male and female guides?

### BEYOND BASICS:

- What is your guide to guest ratio?
- How many guests is each guide responsible for?
- Besides excellent river, outdoor adventure, and safety skills, what other types of specialized training and backgrounds do your guides possess?
- Do your guides have professional training in customer service?
- What are your guide's two top priorities when leading trips?  
*Hint: Safety should be #1*
- Do your guides have special training working with children?

### RED LIGHTS!

High client to guide ratios may save the outfitter money at a sacrifice to your comfort and safety. The more guides leading clients is preferable – standard ratios on rivers is 1 guide to 6 guests.



“Do your guides all have advanced first-aid and CPR certifications?”





“Are you a certified outfitter with permits...?”



## QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COMPANY...

### THE BASICS:

- How long have you been in business?
- Do you carry liability insurance?
- Are you a certified outfitter with permits for the National Forest Lands, Park or Bureau of Land Management lands you take people to?

### BEYOND BASICS:

- What is your company’s mission and most important values in taking people on adventures? Why do you do it?
- How do you transfer these values to your trips and customers?
- May I have a list of references?

### RED LIGHTS!

If the reservationist becomes uncomfortable with your questions and can’t answer them or can’t refer you to someone in the company that can, just try another company.

*Hint: However trained and organized a company is in the reservation office, reflects how they will be in the field.*



Outfitters profit from and are big users of our wilderness areas. Support outfitters that support stewardship.



## QUESTIONS ABOUT STEWARDSHIP & VALUES...

### THE BASICS:

- Do you practice low impact, “leave no trace” techniques on your trips?
- Does your company support stewardship? How?

*Hint: Do they run river and/or wilderness clean-up trips, do they donate to stewardship causes, do they train their guides so this is a priority.*

### BEYOND BASICS:

- Are guests provided options on how to better appreciate and take care of the outdoors that they are enjoying?
- Does the company have other community and environmental protection programs they are involved in? Such as a Stewardship Fund for all guests to support along with them?
- Do you recycle on trips?

### RED LIGHTS!

Outfitters profit from and are big users of our wilderness areas. Support outfitters that support stewardship. They are all fun – choose wisely the ones that are also taking care and giving back!